MUSTE NOTES
News from the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute
VOL. 11, NUMBER 1 FALL 2003

August 29, 2003

Dear Friends,

For nearly 30 years, the Muste Institute has been working in the background, supporting activist projects through grants and sponsorships, and spreading the word about nonviolence through our popular pamphlet series. But even among the activists who benefit from our grants, and the readers of our Essay Series pamphlets, both A.J. Muste and the Institute founded in his honor remain largely unknown, especially to younger generations. The result of this low profile is that many activists don't know they can benefit from our resources.

We're working to change that. This year we've added new staff (administrative assistant Jeanne Strole, who started here in June) and new board members (Diane Tosh and Rebecca Libed, who joined earlier this year after stints on the staff). We're recruiting more board members, revamping our website, stepping up literature promotion and organizing special events (such as the Howard Zinn documentary screening planned for November—see page 2).

We want you to join us in this effort. Tell your fellow activists, friends and colleagues about the Muste Institute and our programs. If you have a website, put in a link to ours (ajmuste.org). Buy some of our pamphlets to distribute to schools, libraries or even to friends as gifts (use the handy form on the back page of this newsletter).

And, of course, make a contribution. If you haven't already responded to our recent appeal, please send us a donation now. If you already sent one, thank you! Any additional gift you can send will help us fuel and sustain this new energy.

Some of you may have recently received an extra "child deduction" tax refund. This is the Bush administration's bribe to smooth over concerns about mounting military spending in Iraq while education, healthcare, libraries and social services are slashed at home. It would be a great and powerful gesture if you use this "tax cut" to boost the nonviolent struggle for justice around the world by sending a tax-deductible contribution to the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute.

In peace,

Murray Rosenblith

Murray Rosenblith
Executive Director

NYC Student Designs Peace Banner

PHOTO BY JEANNE STROLE

On August 19, the winning design in the Banners for Peace contest was unveiled atop the roof of 339 Lafayette Street. The banner is the creation of Philip Madrazo, a New York City high school student, and is the culmination of several months' collaboration between Philip and Lee Brozgold, a local artist and volunteer archivist at the War Resisters League. Philip, who attends the Michael J. Petrides School on Staten Island, submitted the winning design and worked with Lee during the summer to develop the banner.

The student and his family gathered with Muste Institute Board members, staff and volunteers to unveil and celebrate the completed banner. Executive Director Murray Rosenblith presented Philip with the award for the design: a check for $50.

PHOTO BY LEE BROZGOLD

Over the past ten years, the neighborhood surrounding the Muste Institute has been inundated with commercial advertising. The Institute has consistently refused to allow its property to be used for any commercial display. In the past, activist tenants have displayed anti-war and social justice banners along the building's roof. This effort dates back to 1982 when 339 Lafayette Street was completely decorated with banners in support of the United Nations' Second Special Session on Disarmament and the massive June 12 peace demonstration. In the months leading up to the Gulf War, an enormous banner demanding "Talks, not Troops" adorned the roof. In the spring of 1995, as President Clinton was busily slashing health and welfare spending, staff members of the Muste Institute and War Resisters League put up a banner reading: "It's simple—cut the military budget."

Immediately after September 11,

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Above: Unveiling the banner on the roof of the Peace Pentagon.

Left: At a celebration at the Muste office, Executive Director Murray Rosenblith awards contest winner Philip Madrazo a $50 check for his peace banner design.

New Developments

An Update on Projects Funded by the Muste Institute

On October 11, 2003, **Pennsylvania Abolitionists United Against the Death Penalty** will sponsor a "Rally for a Moratorium on Executions" in the state capital, Harrisburg. Featured speakers at the rally will include former Illinois governor George Ryan, who imposed a moratorium on executions and commuted the sentences of all death row prisoners in his state before leaving office. The 3pm rally at the west entrance to the Capitol (3rd and State Streets) will be followed by a 5pm march to the mansion of Governor Ed Rendell. Earlier in the day, a mid-Atlantic regional student conference against the death penalty will be held at the Grace United Methodist Church in Harrisburg.

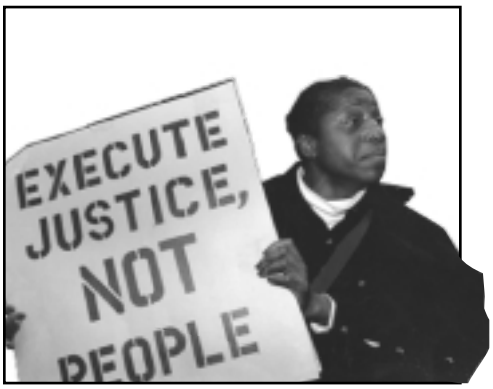

PHOTO BY HARVEY FINKLE

Governor Rendell has repeatedly refused to consider a moratorium, despite a March 2003 report in which the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Committee on Racial and Gender Bias in the Justice System called for a halt to executions. The Committee concluded that race plays "a major, if not overwhelming, role in the imposition of the death penalty in some counties in Pennsylvania,"and that the state is failing to provide indigent capital defendants with adequate representation.

The rally will mark the culmination of a six-month statewide campaign for a moratorium, which the Muste Institute supported with a $1,000 grant last December. With busloads of people set to arrive from around the state, organizers hope the October rally will be the largest public gathering condemning capital punishment in Pennsylvania's history. For more information, contact Pennsylvania Abolitionists at 215-724-6120 or pauadp@aol.com.

NYC Screening of Howard Zinn Documentary

"I had a modest goal when I became a teacher. I wanted to change the world."

— Howard Zinn

On Wednesday, November 12, 2003, the Muste Institute will sponsor a screening of *"Howard Zinn: You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train,"* a new documentary by Deb Ellis and Denis Mueller which the Muste Institute funded with a $1,000 grant last December. The film portrays historian and activist Zinn's involvement in the most important social movements of the 20th century, and his continuing engagement in the most critical issues facing our world today.

The film will be screened at 7pm at the Puffin Room, at 435 Broome Street, between Broadway and Crosby in downtown Manhattan. Refreshments will be served.

May 4, 1971 – Howard Zinn being arrested in front of the Federal Building in Boston at a protest against the Vietnam war. During this period, Zinn was very outspoken about the role of civil disobedience.

The screening will coincide with *Shocked and Awed: Iraqi Children Depict "Operation Iraqi Freedom"*, a collection of artwork drawn in June 2003 by the children of Assail School, Baghdad, Iraq, curated by Carl Rosenstein & collected by Patrick Dillon. Admission for the screening and the art exhibit will be by donation.

The Puffin Room is an interactive cultural exhibition space operated by the Puffin Foundation, which provides grants to artists and art organizations who are often excluded from mainstream opportunities due to their race, gender, or social philosophy.

If you are making up your will, we hope you will consider leaving a bequest to the Muste Institute to ensure the continuation of our work in the future. A suggested simple wording to use in making bequests is: "I bequeath_____dollars ($_____) or _____ percent of my estate to the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute, Inc., a charitable, not-for-profit organization located at 339 Lafayette Street, New York, New York, 10012, to be used for its general purposes." To discuss other types of bequests, such as those directed toward a specific purpose, please contact our office.

MUSTE QUOTES

"The world does not have to go to war and commit suicide.... But it can escape that calamity only if there are those who do not believe that catastrophe is inevitable; who do not believe that you have to line up with one side or the other in the 'cold' war; who are willing to pursue a course that will seem politically ineffective and foolish to 'the wise of this world'...."

(from Theology of Despair, an Open Letter to Reinhold Niebuhr, 1948)

New Grants, June-July 2003

GABRIELA NETWORK NY/NJ
New York, NY: $1,500

GABRIELA Network NY/NJ (GABNet), is a local chapter of Gabriela Network, a Philippine-US women's solidarity organization founded in 1989. It functions as a training ground for women's leadership, and helps articulate women's points of view. GABNet effects change through organizing, educating, fundraising, networking, and advocacy. This grant, awarded to GABNet's NY/NJ Chapter, will go toward developing educational materials and events for the Women's Anti-Imperialist League (WAIL), focused on the impact of US imperialism on women around the world.

JEWS FOR RACIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE
New York, NY: $1,500

JFREJ was organized in 1990 to provide a Jewish voice in multicultural coalitions for social justice in New York City and a progressive voice in the local Jewish community. This grant goes for an educational event in New York, focused on the domestic-global connections between US involvement in Iraq and the war on immigrants at home. The event will serve to educate and galvanize JFREJ members and help focus their future organizing work.

JUBILEE PROJECT
Sneedville, Tennessee: $2,000

Members of the United Methodist Church formed the Jubilee Project in 1991 to assist in the empowerment of people in Hancock County, Tennessee, through enhancement of self-worth, abilities and opportunities. This grant goes for a weekend peace and justice training aimed at bringing together local working class Latino and Caucasian youth from around the Appalachian region to deal with issues of segregation, oppression and injustice in their communities.

MEDIA TANK
Philadelphia, PA: $2,000

Media Tank, incorporated in January 2002, is an innovative nonprofit organization working to bring together media arts, education and activism to build broader awareness of and support for media as a vital civic, cultural and communications resource. The grant is designated for educational and resource materials for activists, focused on the connections and conflicts of interest between the mainstream media and the war in Iraq.

RED JUVENIL
Medellín, Colombia: $4,000

The Muste Institute granted $2,000 from its general fund and $2,000 from our donor-directed Sheilah's Fund East to this Medellín, Colombia-based youth group for the Active Nonviolence and War Resistance International Conference in August 2003. The conference in Medellín served as an international gathering of peace activists and nonviolence activists from abroad with activists from Colombia, sharing experiences and skills of working in an environment of violence and armed conflict.

WASHINGTON STATE JOBS WITH JUSTICE
Seattle, WA: $1,500

Since local community and labor leaders founded Washington State Jobs with Justice in 1993 as a multi-issue coalition, it has grown to include more than 100 organizations and over 6,000 individuals working for economic justice. This grant will go toward the Peace and Worker Organizing During Time of War program, mobilizing labor, community and religious organizations in united nonviolent action to defend civil rights, labor rights and peace.

Peace Banner

Continued from page 1

2001, reacting to the attack on the World Trade Center (less than two miles south of the Muste building), a group of activists at 339 Lafayette quickly made up a banner featuring a well-known quote from Mohandas Gandhi: "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind." This banner remained on the Bleecker Street side of the building for over a year before it disintegrated. In the spring of 2003, Lee Brozgold proposed that the Muste Institute create a contest for high school students to design and install a more permanent banner using this same quote.

Philip's design was influenced by a close friend of his who is blind. In fact, Philip, in order to better understand his friend, learned Braille. He used this knowledge to create the banner which will remain on view indefinitely atop the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute building at 339 Lafayette.

PHOTO BY JEANNE STROLE

Philip Madrazo and Lee Brozgold hard at work creating the banner in the hallway of the Muste building.

The A.J. Muste Memorial Institute makes small grants to groups doing nonviolent organizing for social change. Our next deadline for proposals is October 10, 2003. Guidelines are available on our website at www.ajmuste.org.

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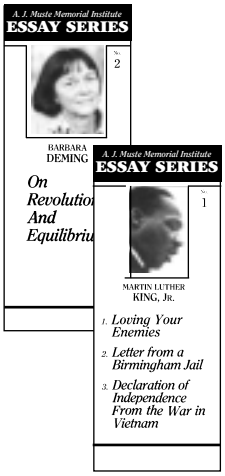


#1: Martin Luther King, Jr.—America's leading apostle of human dignity—*Loving Your Enemies*; *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*; *Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam*

qty: _____

#1-Spanish (#13): Martin Luther King, Jr.—Spanish language translation of *Loving Your Enemies* and *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*

qty: _____

#2: Barbara Deming—the feminist connection to nonviolence—*On Revolution and Equilibrium*

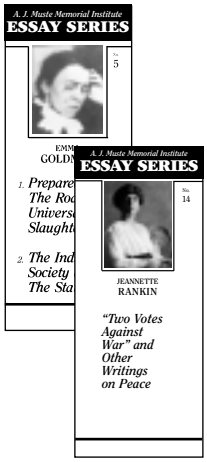
qty: _____

#3: Henry David Thoreau—the original architect of resistance—*On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*

qty: _____

#4: Jessie Wallace Hughan—suffragist, peace activist, founder of the War Resisters League—*Pacifism and Invasion*; *On Duelling*

qty: _____



#5: Emma Goldman — fiery orator, anarchist, agitator for peace and liberation—*Preparedness: The Road to Universal Slaughter*; *The Individual, Society and the State*

qty: _____

#6: Rosa Luxemburg — courageous leader of Germany's democratic socialist movement—*Prison Letters*

qty: _____

#7: A. J. Muste—foremost Century pacifist theoretician and activist, minister, socialist—*Who Has the Spiritual Atom Bomb?*

qty: _____

#8: *On Wars of Liberation*—three essays on pacifist responses to armed freedom struggles, including analysis of Gandhi's position

qty: _____

#9: Aldous Huxley — Twentieth Century visionary and prolific writer—*Science, Liberty and Peace*

qty: _____

#10: Paul Goodman — pacifist, anarchist, activist—*The Morality of Scientific Technology*; *The Psychology of Being Powerless*

qty: _____

#11: *Some Writings on War Tax Resistance*—thoughts, poems, tales from resisters, including Juanita Nelson, Allen Ginsberg and Pete Seeger

qty: _____

#12: Sidney Lens—peace and labor activist, socialist, occasional political candidate—six articles spanning three decades on the state of the U.S. labor movement

qty: _____

#14: Jeannette Rankin —first woman in Congress, suffragist, pacifist—*"Two Votes Against War" and Other Writings on Peace"*

qty: _____

#15: David McReynolds—longtime activist with the War Resisters League, Socialist Party presidential candidate —*A Philosophy of Nonviolence*

qty: _____

Peace Agitator: the story of A.J. Muste, by Nat Hentoff. An activist writer chronicles the 'grandfather' of the current U.S. peace movement—minister, labor activist, pacifist and resister. This 1982 edition contains many photographs and an introduction by Larry Gara, a leading historian of the nonviolence movement.

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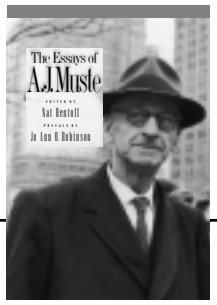

The Essays of A.J. Muste

Edited by Nat Hentoff, preface by Jo Ann O. Robinson. Originally issued in 1967, this new edition includes Muste's "Notes for an Autobiography," plus essays on pacifism, civil rights, trade unionism and foreign policy. Written between 1905 and 1966, the essays stand as an extraordinary companion to our everyday work for peace and social justice. qty:_____

Muste Institute t-shirts are black cotton with a four-color geometric design and the words: *"There is no way to peace, peace is the way - A.J. Muste"* Available in large and extra large (please specify) for $15 each.

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